

The Gig Organizer ^{#4}

News for gig workers ★ ★ ★ ★ Written by gig workers

Launching the National Gig Worker Survey

We are excited to announce the launch of our National Gig Worker Survey! This survey will be administered continuously among Gig Worker supporters and members in order to collect key information about the issues surrounding our work and the real wages we get after accounting for costs of production. For app-based drivers, this data will allow us to extrapolate larger findings from corporate financial reports, which do not take into account the discrepancy between gross earnings and nominal wages. Overall, we want to use this survey as a tool of investigation and organization, not just collecting information for information's sake, but using these findings to launch campaigns of material action against our exploiters.

The survey will be administered in two parts that may be updated as the survey progresses:

Part 1.) General Questionnaire

Part 2.) Long-term Wage Estimates and/or Job Reports

As of now, we have released a General Questionnaire that any gig worker can fill out [here](#). For those who want to get further involved in Gig Worker or any of its committees, we have a spreadsheet that app-based drivers can use to compile and calculate wage and expense estimates, and we will be soliciting social investigation reports from domestic and app-based drivers respectively.

Towards a revolutionary gig workers movement!

Appendix: Explaining Our Statistical Method

In the Excel sheet we are sharing with our app-based driver supporters and members, we will be collecting the information necessary to calculate our real nominal wages. That is, our gross earnings minus our gas, insurance, phone, car and 1099 tax-expenses, the wage we actually get to spend on the survival of ourselves and our families (aka net earnings). This information is not collected by our employers for two main reasons: 1.) it would require them to have knowledge of our day-to-day personal expenses and 2.) more importantly, it would reveal just how little we are actually paid.

For example, one of our DoorDasher's made \$54.02, \$14.41/hour, or \$0.89/mile after working 3.75 hours and driving 60.58 miles. After accounting for their gas expense, insurance premium, phone bill, and self-employment tax, they racked up \$13.60 in total costs of production. This decreased their net earnings to \$40.42, \$10.78/hour, or \$0.67/mile. However, the amount paid by DoorDash was even smaller. After subtracting tips, \$33.02 to be exact, that leaves a company-paid nominal wage of just \$7.40, \$1.97/hr, or \$0.12/mile.

This information may provide us the knowledge of how little we're actually paid by a corporation, but it also serves another purpose by allowing us to compare local data with corporate financials and extrapolate from there. In particular, by comparing our earnings to the total labor-costs and gross profits reported by our companies, we can calculate an average rate of exploitation (ROE) for Gig Worker members and supporters. The ROE expresses the amount of surplus-value or profit, aka unpaid labor, we generate for every dollar actually paid to our nominal wage by the company, revealing the extent of our exploitation. The wealth of capitalists and corporations doesn't come from just anywhere. Their income is taken from the additional sum of value we can create above what it actually cost us to provide that labor, while they themselves produce no value. The ruling class lives off of our backs, off our unpaid labor.

The "rate of exploitation" or "rate of surplus-value," in Marxist terminology, is expressed in the formula s/v , "s" being surplus-value and "v" being variable capital. Variable capital refers to that portion of the capital advanced (by DoorDash in this case) that goes towards employing laborers who will work for a wage. This is equivalent to what we've been calling "nominal wages" or "net earnings," but only that amount actually paid by the company, excluding tips. On the other hand, another part of DoorDash's capital advanced in the form of gross earnings goes towards paying for our costs of production. We can notate this as " c_e " for employee-borne constant capital, that portion of DoorDash or other gig corporations' capital used for costs of production paid directly out-of-pocket by the worker. This gives us a formula for variable capital or company-paid net earnings of $v = \text{gross earnings} - (c_e + \text{tips})$, showing how our exploitation increases as costs of production increase and therefore lessen our net earnings.

$\text{Net earnings}/v = \text{gross earnings} - (\text{costs of production}/c_e + \text{tips}) = \$54.02 - (\$13.60 + \$33.02) = \$7.40$

Because corporations don't calculate our nominal wages for us, we must estimate average rates of exploitation using localized sums. Last quarter, DoorDash paid a total of \$1.941 billion towards the gross earnings of its DoorDashers, represented as "adjusted costs of revenue," and reported \$1.995 billion in gross profit. In this case, gross profit would act as our surplus-value. By dividing DoorDash's gross profits by the amount they paid us, we see the ratio of surplus-value to company-paid gross earnings is \$1.03.

With our DoorDasher, they were paid \$21.00 by the company for that day's trip, which means they generated approximately \$21.58 ($\$21.00 \times \1.0278) in gross profit (s) based on the quarterly average. Dividing that by their real nominal wage of \$7.40 (v), we get a localized rate of exploitation of 291.62%. For every \$1.00

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actually kept by our DoorDasher from the company that day, they created an additional \$2.92 for DoorDash's gross profit.

To be clear, this exact proportion only expresses the average rate of exploitation for this specific DoorDasher according to their individual data for this trip, on the one hand, and the Q1 financials of DoorDash, on the other. This is not an accurate depiction of the ROE for all DoorDashers, much less app-based drivers in general, during this quarter. However, we can increase this accuracy the greater our sample size is, approximating the cumulative data we would have if corporations kept track of and published our total costs of production. That is the main long-term goal of this survey.

By calculating average rates of exploitation, we can expose to all gig workers how much poverty we are truly in. The modern tipping system is nothing more than a form of organized pauperism that allows corporations to pay unlivable wages by forcing workers to rely directly on consumers for the majority of our compensation. This information does not just serve to highlight our destitution, however. The rate of exploitation gives us a concrete goal. This is something we must seek to permanently decrease through nominal and real wage increases that actively diminish the profit-making abilities of our employers in the long-term, pitting us against them. While workers constantly strive to increase our compensation, capitalists want the opposite, to diminish our wage, so they can take more of it in the form of surplus-value and profit. This puts us in an antagonistic, irreconcilable, life-and-death contradiction with our employers and the ruling class as a whole, and the rate of exploitation perfectly expresses that fact. By escalating this contradiction, organizing and steeling ourselves in class struggle, and mobilizing our forces against those of our exploiters, we can push through demands and changes that negatively impact the ruling class, decrease our rate of exploitation, and gradually build up to abolishing exploitation altogether.

DoorDashing in Extreme Weather

By Forum Admin Jolene Dasher, Posted 07/03/2026

It's been less than 5 months since my last post on this topic, and now the Tri-Cities (and East TN as a whole) is experiencing a massive heat wave! Temperatures of 95-105 degrees. Once again, DoorDash and other gig corporations are showing their willingness to sacrifice their workers health for profit. They're doing nothing to ensure their workers have a safe vehicle with working A/C, and don't guarantee we'll even have enough money to fix a broken A/C after all the other work and living expenses we have to put up with. My car barely has working A/C. I have to constantly turn it on and off to refresh the cooling or else the air will just be at outside temperatures. Definitely don't have the money to fix that and don't know if I ever will?

But c'mon, we made DoorDash's owners \$183 million last quarter and generated an astounding \$4 billion in revenue. And what'd we get? A \$50 million "gas relief" program that didn't come close to making up for the devaluation of our wage caused by gas inflation. Now we're expected to maintain a heat-safe vehicle with a lesser wage that we can hardly even use for our living expenses. Fuck that shit.

DoorDash, Uber, GrubHub, InstaCart, Amazon Flex, etc., etc., all these mofos need to pay up. The New Labor Organizing Committee, on top of demanding a \$30/hr minimum wage (after all work and tax expenses), advocates for hazard pay of 1.5-2x in extreme weather conditions like these. We should also demand that companies cover the costs of maintaining safe equipment with no reduction in our gross earnings.

NLOC Statement on the Michigan 8

On June 10, several students across multiple townships in Michigan were raided by the FBI. These raids happened because the students had participated in protests against the fascist state of Israel's ethnic cleansing campaign in Gaza. There is no justification other than the state felt threatened by mass opposition to their policy of robbing the American masses in order to fund Zionist expansion in the Middle East, and so decided to send their political police to intimidate students and by extension the millions of people who protested. The FBI may be cracking down on anti-Zionist and anti-fascist students now, but it must be remembered that they have an extensive record of persecuting labor organizers, going back to the founder J. Edgar Hoover who organized the Palmer raids.

Why does this concern NLOC affiliates? One of the arrested belonged to the Revolutionary Student Union. This organization has supported the NLOC, particularly in our mission to organize educators. On top of this, both the NLOC and the RSU have opposed the genocide in Gaza and in particular the support for this genocide among the state teachers' unions and the AFL-CIO. Therefore we request NLOC supporters to contribute to the campaign to free the Michigan 8, whether by attending any local protests or by contributing to their legal defense fund at <https://chuffed.org/project/um-palestine-legalfund>.



Joint Statement



Fundraiser



The Gig Organizer is a newsletter written by and for gig workers in the service industry, operating both on- and off-the-job. Gig Worker Committees are geographic-based organizations of rank-and-file contributors, distributors, and representatives united in the class struggle for short-term and long-term economic and political demands. The Gig Workers' Forum (U.S.) is a publicly-available communications tool for the sharing of advice, grievances, demands, and the coordination of mass meetings. Our long term goal is the formation of a revolutionary gig workers' trade union and a service workers' industrial union.